

In the claims

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. Withdrawn.
2. Withdrawn.
3. Withdrawn.
4. Withdrawn.
5. Withdrawn.
6. Withdrawn.
7. Withdrawn.
8. Withdrawn.
9. Withdrawn.
10. Withdrawn.
11. Withdrawn.

12. (Currently amended) In combination, a heat shield and a vibration insulator for a vehicle exhaust system; the combination comprising:
- a vibration insulator having a frame with an outer surface; a front surface and a rear surface; and
- a flexible, non-metallic heat shield having a cup-shaped body defining a chamber, the chamber having an inner surface; the heat shield and vibration insulator being complementarily shaped and when the vibration insulator is held within the

chamber, at least a portion of the outer surface and front surface lie in contact with the inner surface of the chamber; the heat shield adapted to thermally insulate the vibration insulator from an external heat source.

13. (Original) The combination of claim 12, wherein the heat shield is manufactured from a flexible, heat-resistant material.

B1 14. (Original) The combination of claim 13, wherein the heat shield is manufactured from an elastomer.

15. (Original) The combination of claim 14, wherein the heat shield is manufactured from a silicone elastomer.

16. (Original) The combination of claim 15, wherein the heat shield is manufactured from a silicone elastomer selected from the group ASTM D2000 classification GE, FC, FE and FK.

17. (Original) The combination of claim 14, wherein the elastomer is fluorolastomer.

18. (Original) The combination of claim 14, wherein the body is manufactured from ethylene acrylic.

19. (Previously submitted) In combination, a heat shield and a vibration insulator for a vehicle exhaust system; the combination comprising:

a vibration insulator having a frame with an outer surface; a front surface and a rear surface; and

a heat shield having a cup-shaped body defining a chamber; the vibration insulator being substantially disposed within the chamber with the heat shield adapted to protect the vibration insulator against an external heat source; wherein the heat shield includes at least one internal bead projecting into the chamber; the bead at least partially retaining the heat shield on the vibration insulator.

20. (Previously submitted) The combination of claim 19, wherein the vibration insulator includes an external projection; the projection cooperating with the bead to hold the heat shield on the vibration insulator.

21. (Original) The combination of claim 12, wherein the heat shield and insulator form air spaces between them.

22. (Previously submitted) The combination of claim 21, wherein the frame of the insulator includes protuberances and valleys defines between the protuberances; wherein the body of the heat shield includes sidewalls and a bottom wall; and the air spaces are formed between the valleys of the frame and the sidewalls of the heat shield.

23. (Previously submitted) In combination, a heat shield and a vibration insulator for a vehicle exhaust system; the combination comprising:

a vibration insulator having a frame with an outer surface, a front surface and a rear surface; the frame of the vibration insulator including protuberances which have a second front surface that extends further outwardly from the frame than the ~~first~~ front surface of the frame; and

b) a heat shield having a cup-shaped body defining a chamber; the vibration insulator being substantially disposed within the chamber so that the heat shield is adapted to protect the vibration insulator against an external heat source; and wherein the second front surface of the protuberances abuts the heat shield and air spaces are formed between the heat shield and the front surface of the frame of the vibration insulator.


24. (Original) The combination of claim 12; wherein the body of the heat shield is shaped like a diamond with rounded corners.

25. (Original) The combination of claim 24, wherein the body includes straight sidewalls extending between the rounded corners.

26. (Currently amended) An improved motor vehicle having a chassis and an exhaust system, the exhaust system having an exhaust pipe and a hanger connecting the exhaust pipe to the chassis; a vibration insulator disposed on the

hanger, the vibration insulator having a frame with an outer surface and a front surface; the improvement comprising:

a flexible, non-metallic heat shield; the heat shield having a cup-shaped body defining a chamber that has an inner lining; the chamber sized to receive the vibration insulator so that the inner lining of the chamber contacts at least a portion of the outer surface and the front surface of the vibration insulator; the body adapted to shield the chamber from an external heat source.

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27. (Previously submitted) The improved motor vehicle of claim 26, wherein the heat shield is manufactured from a flexible, heat resistant material.
28. (Previously submitted) The improved motor vehicle of claim 27, wherein the heat shield is manufactured from an elastomer.
29. (Previously submitted) The improved motor vehicle of claim 28, wherein the heat shield is manufactured from a silicone elastomer.
30. (Previously submitted) The improved motor vehicle of claim 29, wherein the heat shield is manufactured from a silicone elastomer selected from the group ASTM D2000 classification GE, FC, FE and FK.
31. (Previously submitted) The improved motor vehicle of claim 28, wherein the

elastomer is fluorolastomer.

32. (Previously submitted) The improvement of claim 27, wherein the body is manufactured from ethylene acrylic.
33. (Original) The improvement of claim 26, wherein the heat shield provides air gaps between the heat shield and the insulator.
34. (Withdrawn).
35. (Previously submitted) The combination of claim 12, in which the heat shield is frictionally secured to the vibration insulator.
36. (Currently amended) In combination, a heat shield and a vibration insulator for a vehicle exhaust system; the combination comprising:
a vibration insulator having a frame with an outer surface; a front surface and a rear surface; the vibration insulator defining at least one aperture extending from the front surface through to the rear surface;
a flexible, non-metallic heat shield having a cup-shaped body defining a chamber, the chamber having a sidewalls and a bottom wall, the bottom wall defining at least one hole therein; and when the vibration insulator is received within the chamber of the heat shield, the aperture in the vibration insulator substantially aligns with the

hole in the heat shield.

37. (Previously submitted) The combination of claim 36, wherein the vibration insulator defines two apertures extending from the front surface through the rear surface and the bottom wall of the heat shield defines two holes therein, and the positions of the two apertures in the vibration insulator substantially align with the two holes in the heat shield; and the vibration insulator and heat shield are adapted to be connected to a vehicle body and an exhaust system via two connectors and the connectors are receivable through the aligned apertures and holes.

38. (Previously submitted) The combination of claim 37, wherein the heat shield is manufactured from a flexible, heat-resistant material.

39. (Previously submitted) The combination of claim 38, wherein the heat shield is manufactured from a silicone elastomer.

40. (Previously submitted) The combination of claim 19, wherein the vibration insulator defines at least one aperture extending from the front surface through to the rear surface; and wherein the heat shield chamber has sidewalls and a bottom wall and the bottom wall defines at least one hole therein; and when the vibration insulator is received within the chamber of the heat shield, the aperture

in the vibration insulator substantially aligns with the hole in the heat shield.

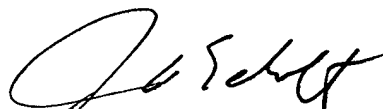
41. (Previously submitted) The combination of claim 23, wherein the vibration insulator defines at least one aperture extending from the front surface through to the rear surface; and wherein the heat shield chamber has sidewalls and a bottom wall and the bottom wall defines at least one hole therein; and when the vibration insulator is received within the chamber of the heat shield, the aperture in the vibration insulator substantially aligns with the hole in the heat shield.
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considered the above arguments. If the Examiner maintains their rejection of claims 12 and 36, Applicant will rewrite claims 22 and 37-39 as independent claims. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of claims 12-18 and 21-39 in light of the above amendments and arguments.

If the Examiners believe a conversation with the undersigned attorney could be of assistance in resolving any outstanding matters, they should not hesitate to contact the undersigned attorney at (330) 244-1174.

Respectfully submitted at Canton, Ohio this 16th day of December, 2003.

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